



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT**

825 5th Street, Suite 111, Eureka, CA 95501-1153
Telephone (707) 476-2390 Fax (707) 445-7299

March 6, 2007

California State Coastal Conservancy
Douglas Bosco, Chairman
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

**Subject: Salt River Enhancement Plan
March 8, 2007 Coastal Conservancy Board Meeting**

Dear Mr. Bosco:

The Humboldt County Board of Supervisors is writing to express its support for the proposal by Coastal Conservancy staff regarding the Salt River Restoration Project in Humboldt County, specifically the consideration and possible Conservancy authorization to disburse up to \$300,000 to the County of Humboldt for completion of a Salt River Enhancement Plan.

Successful implementation of this project would result in substantial resource benefits to the Salt River watershed and would alleviate flooding to privately-owned land as well as city and county infrastructure. While planning efforts have been underway in various forms for over 20 years, the project recently reached a critical juncture. In November 2006, over \$6 million was allocated for implementation funding through two grant programs administered by the State Water Board. In addition, great advances have been made, led by the Humboldt County Resource Conservation District, to foster collaboration among the affected private landowners and public agencies for working together to achieve a watershed-scale, multi-objective project.

The next phase of work is to complete the planning and compliance requirements for the project. If funding is authorized, the Humboldt County Public Works Department is prepared to work closely with the Salt River team to further develop the existing conceptual plan into a final enhancement plan, develop an environmental impact report, and prepare the required permit application materials.

Sincerely,

Bonnie Neely, Chair
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors



Humboldt County Resource Conservation District

Working With
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services

5630 South Broadway, Eureka, CA 95503-6905
PHONE: (707) 444-9708 Ext. 115 FAX: (707) 442-7514

February 22, 2007

Humboldt County Board of Supervisors
825 Fifth Street
Eureka, CA 95501

Subject: Salt River Restoration Project

Dear Humboldt County Board of Supervisors:

The Humboldt County Resource Conservation District (RCD) is pleased to report that funding has been secured from state and federal sources for implementation of a restoration project within the Salt River watershed, which includes the Ferndale bottoms and tributaries from the Wildcat Mountains. The project has multiple objectives including habitat restoration, alleviation of flooding impacts to private property and city and county infrastructure, and sediment reduction. We've reached this point through hard work and unprecedented collaboration between private landowners and multiple public agencies including the County of Humboldt, California Department of Fish & Game, State Coastal Conservancy, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, NOAA Fisheries, Natural Resource Conservation Service, the City of Ferndale, and other partners.

In November 2006, funding for project implementation was authorized from two state sources. The Salt River restoration project was included as one of the projects within the North Coast Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, which ranked first among other regional plans in competition for funding through Proposition 50, the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Act of 2002. Funding was also authorized from the Consolidated Grants Program administered by the State Water Board. In January 2007, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service committed funds for acquisition of a 400-acre parcel located near the confluence of the Salt and Eel Rivers, and this parcel will now be integrated into the overall project plan.

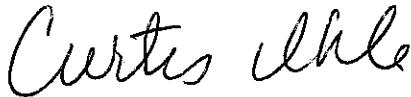
The next phase of the project is to further develop the existing conceptual plan into a final enhancement plan, and to fulfill the applicable environmental compliance requirements. The compliance requirements include developing an environmental impact report (EIR) under the California Environmental Quality Act and obtaining permits from multiple regulatory agencies which have jurisdiction over the project. The need for this project is urgent, and timely completion of the planning and compliance phase is critical for performing on-the-ground work as soon as possible.

Due to the technical and regulatory complexity of this project, the planning and compliance phase would benefit from direct assistance provided by the County Public Works Department, which has experience with similar types of projects. State Coastal Conservancy staff has expressed interest in providing \$300,000 to the County to fund completion of the planning and compliance phase, and the Conservancy board will be considering the staff recommendation for this funding at its March 8, 2007 meeting. If funding is authorized by the Conservancy and the County accepts the funding, then Public Works staff would work closely with the RCD, other members of the Salt River team, and contractors to complete the enhancement plan, develop an EIR, and prepare the required permit application materials.

The County's assistance would go a long way to help ensure that this complex project continues to move forward. If the planning and compliance phase can be completed in a timely manner, then preliminary physical work could possibly begin as early as this fall or winter, and the summer of 2008 would be the target date for performing restoration work within the Salt River channel.

Therefore, the RCD requests that the Board of Supervisors authorize the Public Works Department to lead the planning and compliance phase of the Salt River restoration project, and that the Board of Supervisors express its intent to accept the Conservancy grant for this effort if it is awarded.

Sincerely,



for Mark Moore
Humboldt County Resource Conservation District